

Historical Research about B. F. Bradbury to Write a Future Fairbury History Story about Him

July 18, 2024

I received a packet of information, including a small book, from Mary Farley Cummins, about B. F. Bradbury.

Some of these materials were given to Mrs. Farley by Catherine Wink – Frisby before she passed away.

The first thing I did was search for an obit for B. F. Bradley. I found one in the Blade archives:

April 18, 1919 Blade:

Fairbury, Illinois, Friday, April 18, 1919.

B. F. BRADBURY IS FOUND DEAD

**Body Found By Neighbors Who Had
Suspicioned That Everything
Was Not Right at His Home.**

Frank Bradbury, one of the well known and highly respected citizens of Eppards Point township and known to most everyone in this part of the country, was found dead at his home by John Wink, Wednesday evening about seven o'clock.

On Monday afternoon, when Miss Helen Eckhart, who carries the mail on Route 1 out of Weston, came in from the route, she told her father, the postmaster at Weston that something was surely wrong at Frank Bradbury's, as his mail for Thursday and Friday of last week was still in the box. On Tuesday the mail was still there, and on Wednesday Miss Eckhart insisted that her father call

Mr. Bradbury on the telephone, which he did try to do, but after repeated calls the operator at Weston was unable to get an answer. Mr. Eckhart then called Herman Wink, a neighbor of Mr. Bradbury's, stating the circumstances to him; and asking him to go over to Mr. Bradbury's and investigate. Mr. Wink's sons, Elmer and John, knowing that Mr. Bradbury was rather peculiar about having anyone call on him without first letting him know they were coming, went over to the home of their uncle John Wink, Sr., who is a member on the school board with Mr. Bradbury, and they all three went to the home of Mr. Bradbury together. They walk about the place calling for Mr. Bradbury, and finally Mr. Wink, Sr., decided he would try the kitchen door to see if it was locked, and as he touched the knob the door swung open and there lay Mr. Bradbury on the

cided he would try the kitchen door to see if it was locked, and as he touched the knob the door swung open and there lay Mr. Bradbury on the kitchen floor dead. He had on his overshoes, cap, and work clothes and evidently had just started out doors to do some work. Mr. Wink then went to the home of John Ulfers and called up Coroner Harris at Pontiac, who gave Mr. Cook, the undertaker permission to remove the body to the undertaking establishment in this city

The last person who saw Mr. Bradbury alive was John Ulfers and that was last Thursday afternoon. Mr. Bradbury had been raking stalks. He was a man who went after his mail regularly and it is supposed that he died last Thursday afternoon or night, as Thursday's mail was still in the box together with the rest of the mail which had accumulated since that time. Mr. Ulfers had gone to the Bradbury home earlier in the evening Wednesday, but did not try the doors.

During all this time Mr. Bradbury's stock had not been attended to and the horses when taken out of the barn were weak from the lack of food and frantic. They had gnawed at the manger and when taken out of the barn one of them was so weak it staggered.

Benjamin Franklin Bradbury was born in Peoria county, July 7, 1857 and came to Livingston county with his parents when a boy of 12 years. He was the youngest of a family of children. His father, William Bradbury, was a printer, learning his trade in the same office where Horace Greeley was taking a course. In later years William Bradbury, together with an elder brother were editors of the New York Sun.

His death occurred at the old home.

To the New York Sun.

His death occurred at the old home-
stead of his boyhood days and within
view of Lakeside district school, of
which he had been a director for
about 25 years, having acted in the
capacity of clerk of the board ever
since he was first elected to member-
ship. Previous to his being director
he had taught in the school. He at-
tended school in Pontiac and was a
graduate of Eureka college. He was
a member of the M. W. A. and the
Independent Order of Odd Fellows.
In matters pertaining to the religious
faith his inclination was towards the
Quaker belief of his ancestors.

Mr. Bradbury was a man highly ed-
ucated, but like all people had traits
which other people called "peculiar."
His peculiarity or fad was a study of
the weather and the things that gov-
erned it. He was well read on the
subject and in fact on almost any sub-
ject and in his home had a most com-
plete library. He had also made an
extensive study of astronomy.

He was a bachelor and for
many years resided alone on his farm
where he held the respect and esteem
of all his neighbors and friends.

He leaves one sister, Miss Jennie
Bradbury, who resides in Kankakee,
and a nephew, Robert Bradbury, who
resides near Piper City.

The inquest will be held this morn-
ing.

The funeral services will be held
from the M. E. church this afternoon
at one o'clock, Rev. Thorpe being in
charge of the services.

So Benjamin Franklin Bradbury was born in Peoria County on July 7, 1857. His family moved from Peoria to Eppards Point when he was 12 years old, which would be $1857 + 12 = 1869$.

The Blade issue of April 18, 1919, said he was found dead the previous Wednesday. Consulting a 1919 calendar, Wednesday would have been April 16, 1919.



He was a bachelor, so he never married or had any children.

Is BF Bradbury in any of the 4 Livingston County History Books? (1878, 1888, 1900, and 1909 vol 2).

Nothing in the 1878 history book.

There is a bio for his brother in the 1888 history book. I transcribed it and it is below. When I found it, I did not know for sure that Andrew was related to BF Bradbury, but I found out later using Ancestry.com that he was his brother.

1888 Bio for Andrew Bradbury

ANDREW T. BRADBURY is a representative young farmer of section 30, Avoca Township, and is a native of Massachusetts, where he was born on the 8th of May, 1845. He is the son of Joseph S. (deceased) and Mary M. Bradbury, natives of the States of New Hampshire and Massachusetts respectively. The former's paternal ancestors are of English, while the latter is of French-English descent.

Of the twelve children born to his parents, five survive—Charles W., Andrew J., Jennie L., Benjamin F. and George R. When the subject of this sketch was three years of age, he accompanied his parents when they emigrated to West Virginia, where they resided for two years, and then came to Peoria County, Ill.

In that county they resided until the spring of 1868?, when they came to Livingston County and settled in Eppard's Point Township, where the father died in the year 1880. The mother still survives and is living on the old homestead.

While the father was a citizen of Eppard's Point, he took great interest in all matters pertaining to the development of his township and county. He had the esteem and confidence of all who knew him, and it may truly be said that in his death the county lost one of her best citizens and most public-spirited men.

Andrew J. Bradbury when a boy, received a good district-school education, and with the exception of a few years spent in the occupation of a carpenter, he has been engaged in farming all his life. On the 20th of February, 1872, he was married to Miss Christina Watson, and they have had two children—Robert E., born on the 2d of September, 1875, and James Franklin, on the 20th of July, 1877. Mr. Bradbury's farm consists of 108 acres of well-improved land, on which he has constructed all the buildings necessary for the comfort of his family and domestic animals, and the care of the products of the farm. He has underdrained his land in such an admirable manner that every foot of it is available for cultivation.

When Mr. Bradbury was twenty-one years of age, the time when he started in life for himself, his cash capital consisted of \$3, but with that small beginning he went to work with a will, and the result can be seen by a visit to his excellent farm, and an inspection of the premises. In the fullest sense of the word he is a self-made man, a representative New Englander, coming from a class of people noted for their hardiness, their sterling worth and their indomitable energy. Mr. Bradbury is a Democrat in his political proclivities, to which party he confesses constant allegiance.

Transcribed from the 1888 Livingston County History book by Dale C. Maley - Livingston County Historian on July 17, 2024.

1909 Volume 2 History Book

Found a bio for BF Bradbury and I transcribed it below.

1909 Volume 2 Bio for BF Bradbury:

BRADBURY, Benjamin Franklin, one of the oldest residents of Eppard's Point Township, Livingston County, Ill., a thorough and successful farmer, a man of a high order of intelligence and of broad and varied information, and regarded by all as a leading and eminently useful character in his locality, has lived in Livingston County for forty years, having been brought to the county by his parents when he was a lad of twelve years.

He was born in Peoria County, Ill., on July 7, 1857. His father, Joseph Sanders Bradbury, who was half-owner of a large sawmill in West Virginia, moved from that State to Peoria County in 1850. His mill in Virginia had an extensive run in the lumber regions of that

State, furnishing ties and bridge timbers for new railroads, lumber material for steamboats and the necessary mill material for various other commercial uses.

The cloud of secession was then already lowering over that region, the religious element was divided into North and South Churches, and men often carried fire-arms with them to their places of worship. The parents of Mr. Bradbury entertained anti-slavery sentiments, which, even at that early period, subjected his property to hazards, and made the conditions surrounding his wife and children not altogether free from danger. While the Southerner seemed cordial towards those Northern people who were furthering the enterprises they desired to develop, they were nevertheless plainly getting ready for a conflict which they deemed inevitable, which would establish a Confederacy based on slavery, under the domination of King Cotton.

Slavery, however, was too revolting an institution for the elder Bradbury to uphold, and war in its behalf was a dreadful alternative to be awaited, and for this reason he sold his interests to his partner, who was a college professor, a typical son of the old Dominion, a genial gentleman and considerate towards his slaves. With a substantial profit resulting from the disposition of his share in the saw-mill, the father with his wife and family moved to Illinois, settling in Peoria County.

The birthplace of Benjamin P. Bradbury was a snug little cottage containing six rooms, being one of the most comfortably arranged of the pioneer dwellings in that locality. He was next to the youngest of six living children who reached years of maturity. The father, who was the first of the family to die, was born in Amherst, N. H., July 22, 1811, and grew to manhood in that State, going thence to New York City, and learning the trade of a printer in the office where Horace Greeley was taking the same course. In later years, together, with an elder brother, William L. Bradbury, he was engaged in publishing the New York Sun. This brother died of smallpox, at that time a wide-spread epidemic, sweeping off residents of the city by hundreds.

Being thus left without a partner in the newspaper enterprise, the father continued to publish the Sun alone for several years. It was a profitable enterprise, having a very fine job-work patronage from first-class business men.

Some unique specimens of advertisements then printed in that office are still in the possession of his descendants. These are very large leaf, or sheet cards of unusually heavy printing paper, with a most exquisite, mahoganyized, marbled or sea-blue color. On these are printed, in artistic type and manner, and in gold, silver or bright bronze, the announcements of hotels, marine lines, commercial houses, etc. Few people of the present time have ever beheld more superb typographical work or beautiful paper. At that time it was a very expensive but common and effective method among those of large means, of exploiting business enterprises in large cities.

Having been seized with an optical ailment, Joseph S. Bradbury was finally compelled to dispose of his business interests in New York, and, under the advice of his physician, to seek an outdoor life in a milder climate, he accordingly moved to Wheeling, W. Va., and

as previously indicated, engaged in the manufacture of lumber material. His health being much improved by this change, he was induced to abandon his Virginia occupation, and in order to continue in his out-of-door pursuits, to adopt agricultural pursuits in a pioneer settlement on the prairies of Illinois.

In this region, Peoria was then the only home market for grains and cereals. The farmers in those days shelled corn by hand-shellers, and trampled their grain out with horses, or in some cases flailed it out, as was most convenient. . The scythe was then in vogue, and the odd-looking cradle was the "harvesting machine." The sturdy farmers of early times were thus inured to exertion which would prove fatal to many of the modern younger agriculturists.

Farm labor at the present day is in many parts a song accompaniment to life, and homes and beautiful fields now gladden the landscape which was once the scene of the toils and struggles of the hardy pioneers.

The maiden name of Benjamin P. Bradbury's mother was Mary Mercena Lunt, and she was born in Newburyport, Mass., August 17, 1813, and there received her education in the public schools and academy, subsequently teaching school in that town for many years. She was a cousin of his father, who also had acquired an academic education in his native place, and they were sweethearts throughout their wedded life, giving to their children an ideal home, which is held in hallowed memory. The remains of both parents lie in the quaint little cemetery near the old homestead, where repose the ashes of many of the early settlers of that locality.

The grandfather on the paternal side was William Bradbury, son of Daniel Bradbury, who was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and was killed in the Battle of White Plains. William Bradbury was a wheelwright and carriage-maker by trade, and was also a talented musician, and an instructor in music. The ancestral line of the family was of French-English origin. The maternal grandfather was Richard Lunt, a sailor boy for twenty years, and a sea captain for fifty years later. He was the owner of a merchant vessel which plied between the eastern and southern shores of the United States and the West India Islands, including also the coast of South America bordering on the Caribbean Sea.

Twice during his career as a navigator, he witnessed the slaughter of human life resulting from insurrections in those regions, the Spaniards driving their helpless victims down to the seashore, and after literally cutting them into pieces, casting the mangled bodies of the slain into the waves. In his younger clays, this venerable seaman had some experience in the War of 1812, being twice captured by the British Marines, and his cargoes being confiscated in each instance. It so happened, however, that in both cases his vessel was retaken by United States cruisers.

In the long period of his sea service he was never shipwrecked. A photograph of the veteran sailor at the age of ninety-nine years represents him as unbent in form, with

classic features and eyes as bright as those of a child. He died in his one hundredth year from the effects of a fall upon a sleet-covered sidewalk, and was laid to rest in the cemetery at Newburyport, the city out of which he had sailed for so many years.

Cutting Lunt, uncle of Richard Lunt, was one of the heroic mariners belonging to the crews of John Paul Jones, the illustrious naval commander who, with his three comparatively small vessels, scoured the British waters, destroying the enemy's merchantmen and much shore property. In one of the coast raids quite a number of Commodore Jones' sailors were captured and held as prisoners of war, undergoing severe privations, and among these heroes was Cutting Lunt. Many of the unfortunate prisoners succumbed under the burden of their hardship, dying in captivity, and Cutting Lunt yielded up his life a few days before he was to have been released, the war having been brought to a close.

Benjamin F. Bradbury received an excellent school education in his youth, obtained under the ablest of instructors, and subsequently attended the high school, matriculating also in Eureka College, but not taking the full course. Several of his preceptors were ministers of the Gospel, and their names and characters linger in his memory as suggestions of wholesome and beneficent lives. He has taught school and holds both the second and first grade teacher's certificates, but having the opportunity to engage more profitably in farming, has applied his energies in that direction.

Throughout his agricultural experience he has never, however, ceased to maintain a process of educating himself, and has spent much time in studying the languages and many of the higher and more technical branches of science.

During the last six years, in his intervals of leisure, he has made a most searching study of astronomy, geography and meteorology, for the purpose of preparing an astro-geographical chart on which long range forecasts of weather could be based with reasonable certainty. This chart is intended to reorganize the old principles and methods of weather science, adding materially in the way of new and provable knowledge in meteorology.

The subject of this sketch is a bachelor. He owns the old homestead of his boyhood, fraught with memories of early days ; for the old familiar district school, Lakeside District 87, is in plain sight. There stand the stately trees which his childhood hands planted, and where the birds have sung their songs among the leaves and branches throughout the summers of many lapsing years, his life's dream of happiness has been beautifully realized. With a farm well kept and under thorough cultivation through his own industry; with a cozy home well supplied with good books, papers and magazines, and walls hung with pleasing pictures; with flowers on the lawn to greet the advent of the season of bloom, and all material things to afford charm and cheer, Mr. Bradbury dwells in contentment, one of the most favorably known citizens of Livingston County.

Politically, although of Democratic paternity, Mr. Bradbury has been wont to vote the Republican ticket for Presidential candidates and on national issues. Especially, he

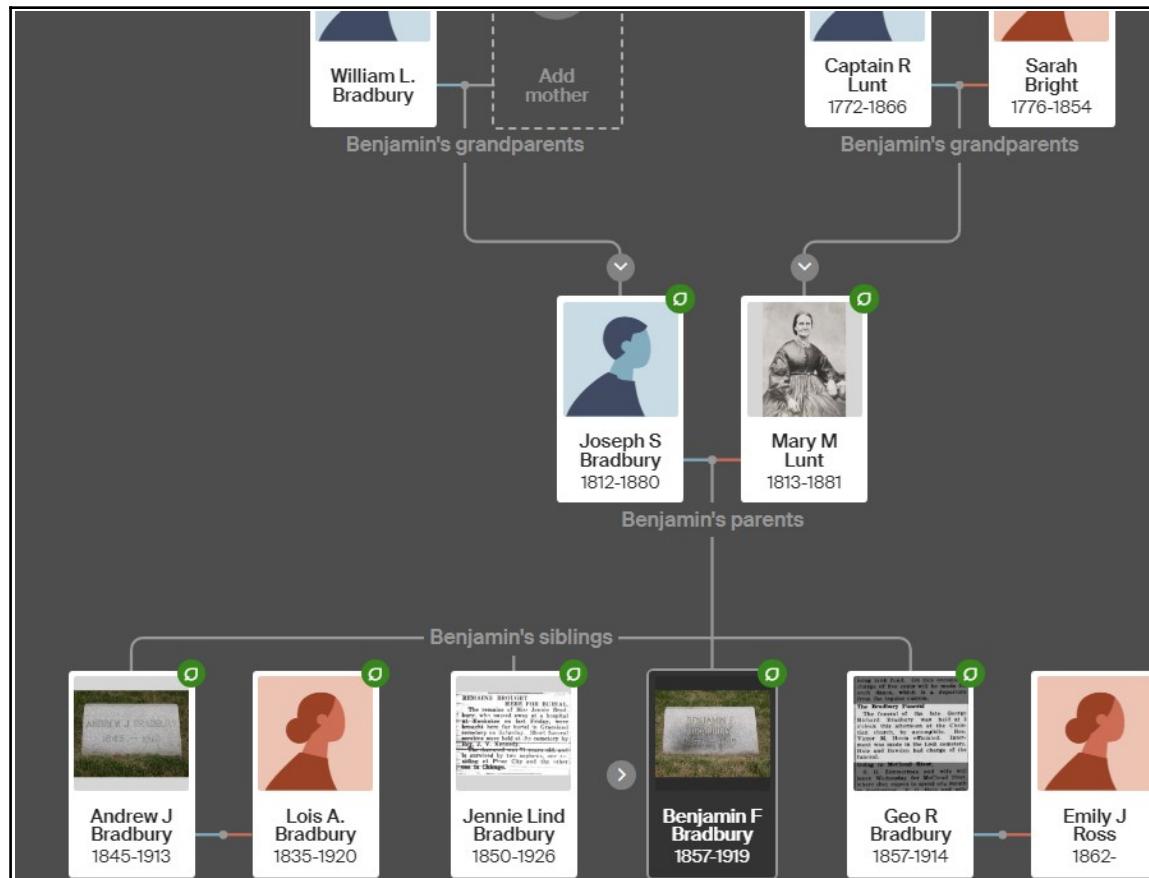
supports those commanding themselves to his judgment as best qualified for the various offices. He has served as School Director in the old home district of his childhood for twenty-one consecutive years, having acted in the capacity of clerk of the board since his first election. Fraternally, he is affiliated with the M. W. A. and the I. O. O. F. In matters pertaining to religious faith, his inclination is towards the Quaker belief of his ancestors, but he has occupied a liberal position towards all Christian denominations, and is in all respects a public-spirited member of the community.

Transcribed from the 1909 Volume 2 Livingston County, Illinois, history book by Dale C. Maley - Livingston County Historian, on July 16, 2024

Ancestry.com

I made a family tree using Ancestry.com for him.

I also entered the 1888 bio for Andrew and the 1909 Volume 2 bio for BF Bradbury into Ancestry.com.



His obit says that William was his father, and that is not correct. Joseph S. Bradbury was his father and his grandfather was William Bradbury.

Jennie Lind Bradbury was later declared legally insane and was put in the Kankakee Mental Hospital, and she died in that hospital. There is a letter on ancestry talking about the terrible time the parents had trying to take of her at home, and suggesting they lock Jennie in chains during the night time to prevent any bad things from happening.

Ford County History Book about Andrew Bradbury

On Ancestry, there is a document from the Ford County history book about Andrew.

"Andrew Jackson Bradbury, second son of Joseph S. Bradbury, was born in Newburyport, Mass. in 1845. At age 21, he started life for himself, with a cash capital of \$3.00, as a carpenter and farmer. He purchased 108 acres of farmland near the family homestead. In 1873, he married Christina Watson. Their children were Robert E., James F., and Ida May. Between 1890 and 1900, he purchased 390 A. in Ford County, (160 A. in Brenton Township and 230 A. in Lyman Township), and he and two sons moved to the farm near Piper City in 1892. His great-grandson, Robert G. Bradbury now resides on this farm."

FORD COUNTY HISTORY, Ford County, Illinois
Copyright 1984 by The Ford County Historical Society

I think I have the Ford County history book, can I find this passage?

Nothing about Bradbury in the 1884 Ford County history book I have. Was there another history book done in 1984 per the citation above?

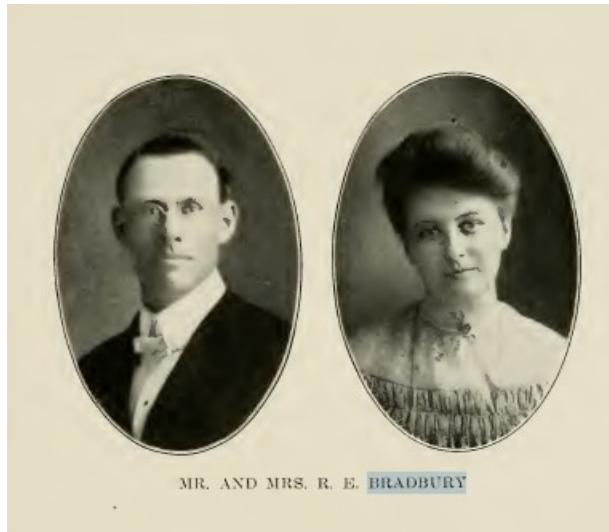
I have a 1908 Ford County history book and it has a bio for RE Bradbury, a son of Andrew Bradbury.

R. E. BRADBURY.

Although one of the younger representatives of agricultural interests in Ford county, R. E. Bradbury is none the less prominent. He is operating two hundred and thii-ty acres of land on sections 3 and 4, Lyman township, and in addition to raising the cereals best adapted to soil and climate, he also conducts a dairy business. He was born in Livingston county, Illinois September 2, 1875, and is the eldest in a family of three children, whose parents are A. J. and Christina (Watson) Bradbury, the other members of the family being : James F., of Ford county ; and Ida, the wife of Dan Cowden, a resident of Nebraska. The father, a native of Massachusetts, accompanied his parents to Peoria county, Illinois, when a small boy. He settled in Ford county in the year 1892, at wdiich time he purchased three hundred and ninety acres of land in the Pan Handle district, this tract being located near Piper City, in wdiich city he now makes his home.

R. E. Bradbury, whose name introduces this revitMV, was reared as a farm lad, early becoming familiar with the duties of the agriculturist. Wo was educated in the district schools of Ford county, iMii-suing his studies in the wnnter months, while in the summer seasons Ik^ assisted in th(> work of the home farm. He remained under the parental roof until he had attained the age of twenty-three years, when he rented a portion of his fathei-'s hind and

began business on his own account. TT(> is now operating two hundred and thirty aci-es situated on sections)} and 4, Lyman townshi]), and in addition to this woi'k is conducting a dairy, in which he is meeting with excellent success, the products of his dairy finding a ready sale on the market, where they command the highest jorices. l'o i)ossesses considerable inventive genius



and pateuted an innbrella holder, August 4, 1905, and has also patented a stove ventilator.

Mr. Bradbury was married in 1905 to Miss Amy Mosher, a native of Ford count}^, and a daughter of Louis and Margaret Mosher, of German descent. Their family numbers five children. The parents now make their home in Roberts, Illinois. Mrs. Bradbury received a good education, having graduated from the Roberts high school. By her marriage she has become the mother of an interesting little daughter and son, Helen Ethel and Franklin Eugene.

Mr. Bradbury supports the men and measures of the republican party.

He is now serving as constable and as school director, in which connections he is giving uniform satisfaction, for his official duties are ever discharged with the same promptness and fidelity that is characteristic of his private interests. He and his wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal church at Roberts, in the work of which they are deeply interested. They are numbered among the highly esteemed young people of the community, and have a host of warm friends.

Errors in Transcription

I am not going to fix these errors at this time. It does say that Andrew came to the Gibson city area in 1892. Maybe that is why he is not shown as owning any land in Avoca Township in the 1893 Atlas because he had moved.

R. E. BRADBURY.

Although one of the younger representatives of agricultural interests in Ford county, R. E. **Bradbury** is none the less prominent. He is operating two hundred and thirty acres of land on sections 3 and 4, Lyman township, and in addition to raising the cereals best adapted to soil and climate, he also conducts a dairy business. He was born in Livingston county, Illinois September 2, 1875, and is the eldest in a family of three children, whose parents are A. J. and Christina (Watson) **Bradbury**, the other members of the family being: James F., of Ford county; and Ida, the wife of Dan Cowden, a resident of Nebraska. The father, a native of Massachusetts, accompanied his parents to Peoria county, Illinois, when a small boy. He settled in Ford county in the year 1892, at which time he purchased three hundred and ninety acres of land in the Pan Handle district, this tract being located near Piper City, in which city he now makes his home.

R. E. **Bradbury**, whose name introduces this review, was reared as a farm lad, early becoming familiar with the duties of the agriculturist. He was educated in the district schools of Ford county, pursuing his studies in the winter months, while in the summer seasons he assisted in the work of the home farm. He remained under the parental roof until he had attained the age of twenty-three years, when he rented a portion of his father's land and began business on his own account. He is now operating two hundred and thirty acres situated on sections 3 and 4, Lyman township, and in addition to this work is conducting a dairy, in which he is meeting with excellent success, the products of his dairy finding a ready sale on the market, where they command the highest prices. He possesses considerable inventive genius

and patented an umbrella holder, August 4, 1903, and has also patented a stove ventilator.

Mr. **Bradbury** was married in 1905 to Miss Amy Mosher, a native of Ford county, and a daughter of Louis and Margaret Mosher, of German descent. Their family numbers five children. The parents now make their home in Roberts, Illinois. Mrs. **Bradbury** received a good education, having graduated from the Roberts high school. By her marriage she has become the mother of an interesting little daughter and son, Helen Ethel and Franklin Eugene.

Mr. **Bradbury** supports the men and measures of the republican party. He is now serving as constable and as school director, in which connections he is giving uniform satisfaction, for his official duties are ever discharged with the same promptness and fidelity that is characteristic of his private interests. He and his wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal church at Roberts, in the work of which they are deeply interested. They are numbered among the highly esteemed young people of the community, and have a host of warm friends.

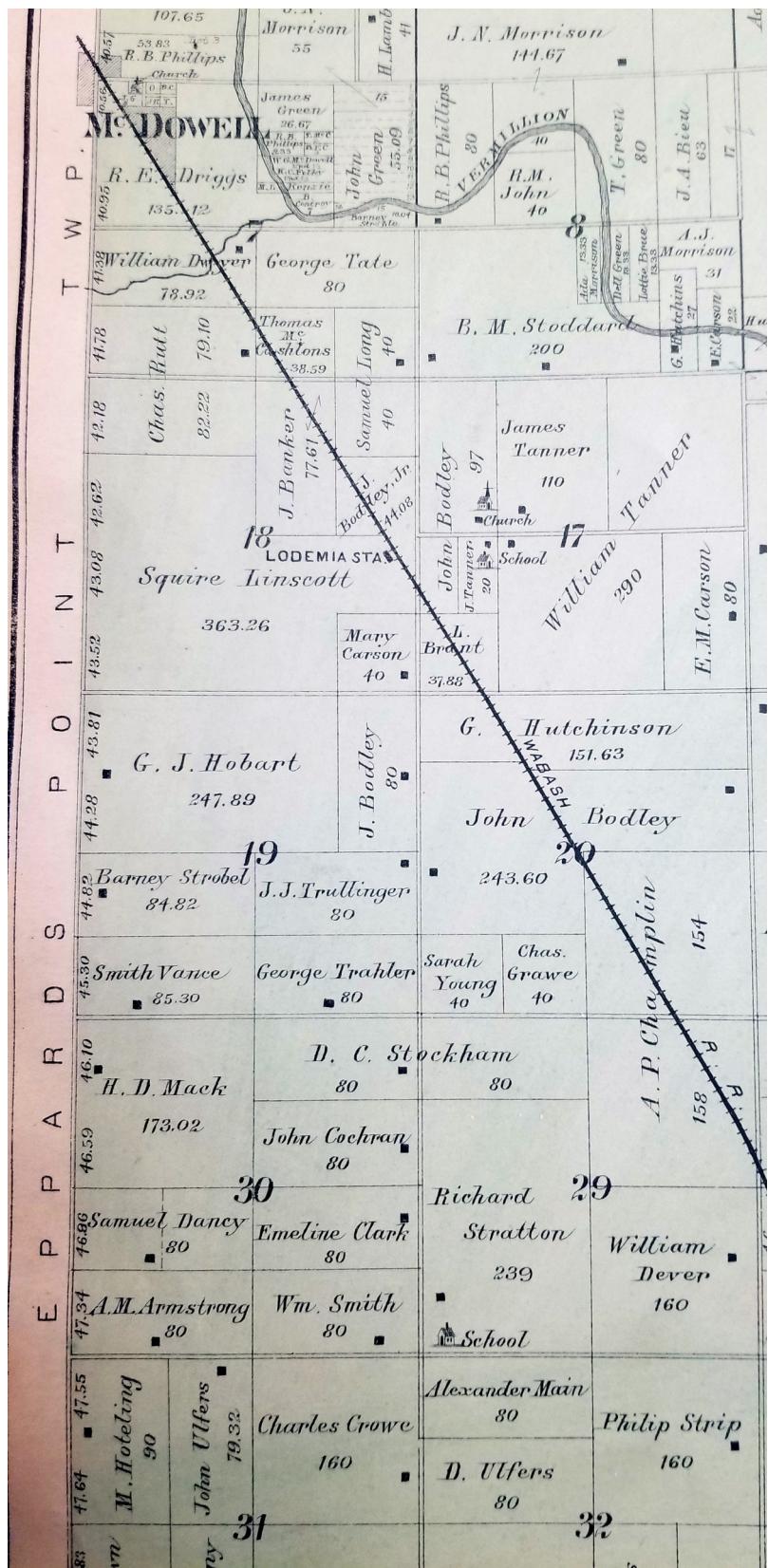
I could not find a 1984 Ford county history book using a Google search.

Did Joseph Bradbury Buy any farmland from US Government in Peoria County?

I checked the Bureau of Land Management database. There are land purchases by a Joseph Bradbury, but none in Peoria County. Must of been another Joseph Bradbury that made the other purchases.

Is the farm of Andrew Bradbury in Avoca Township section 30 shown on the 1893 livingston county atlas?

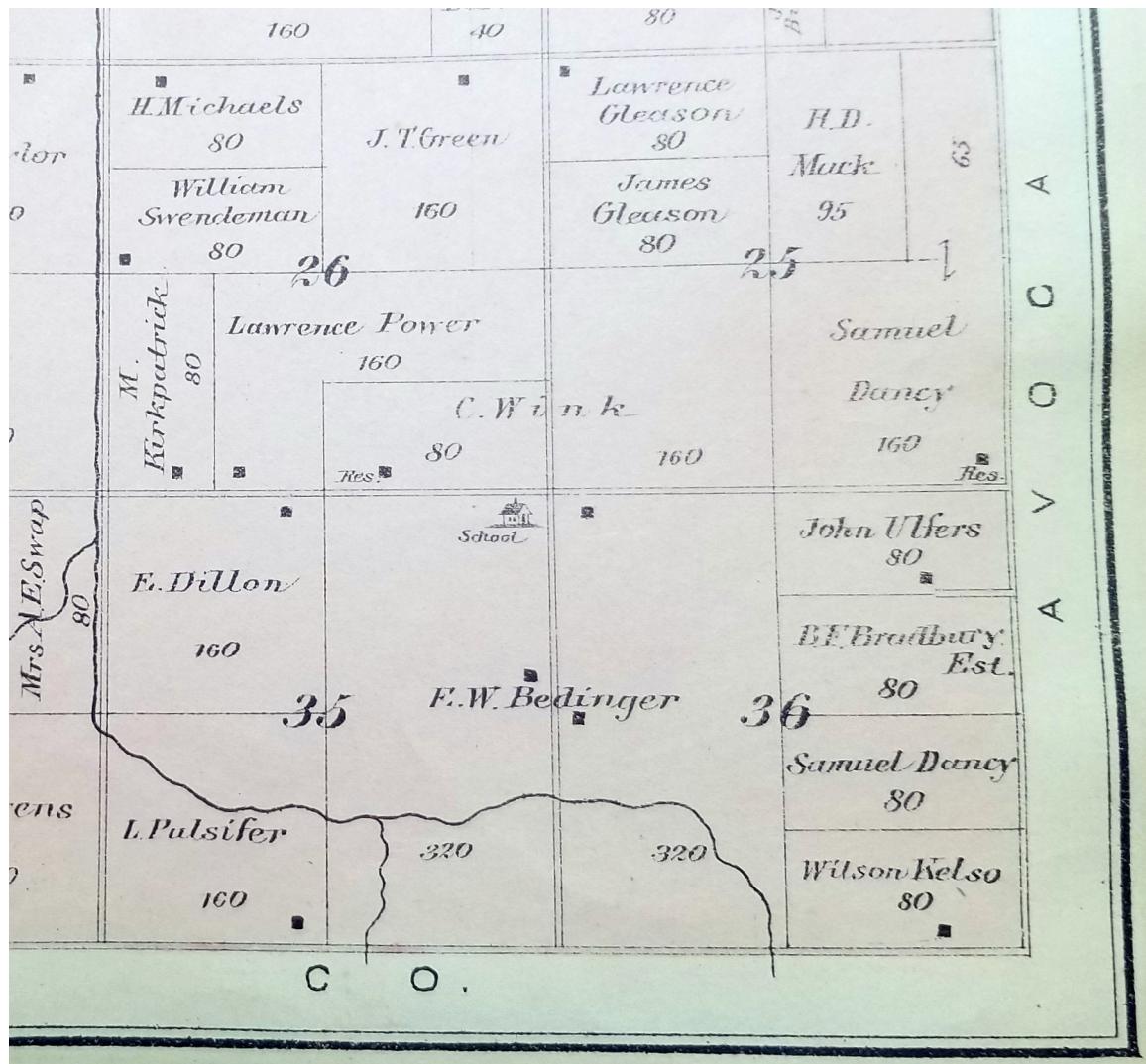
No. This may be because he moved to Gibson city in 1892 per info above.



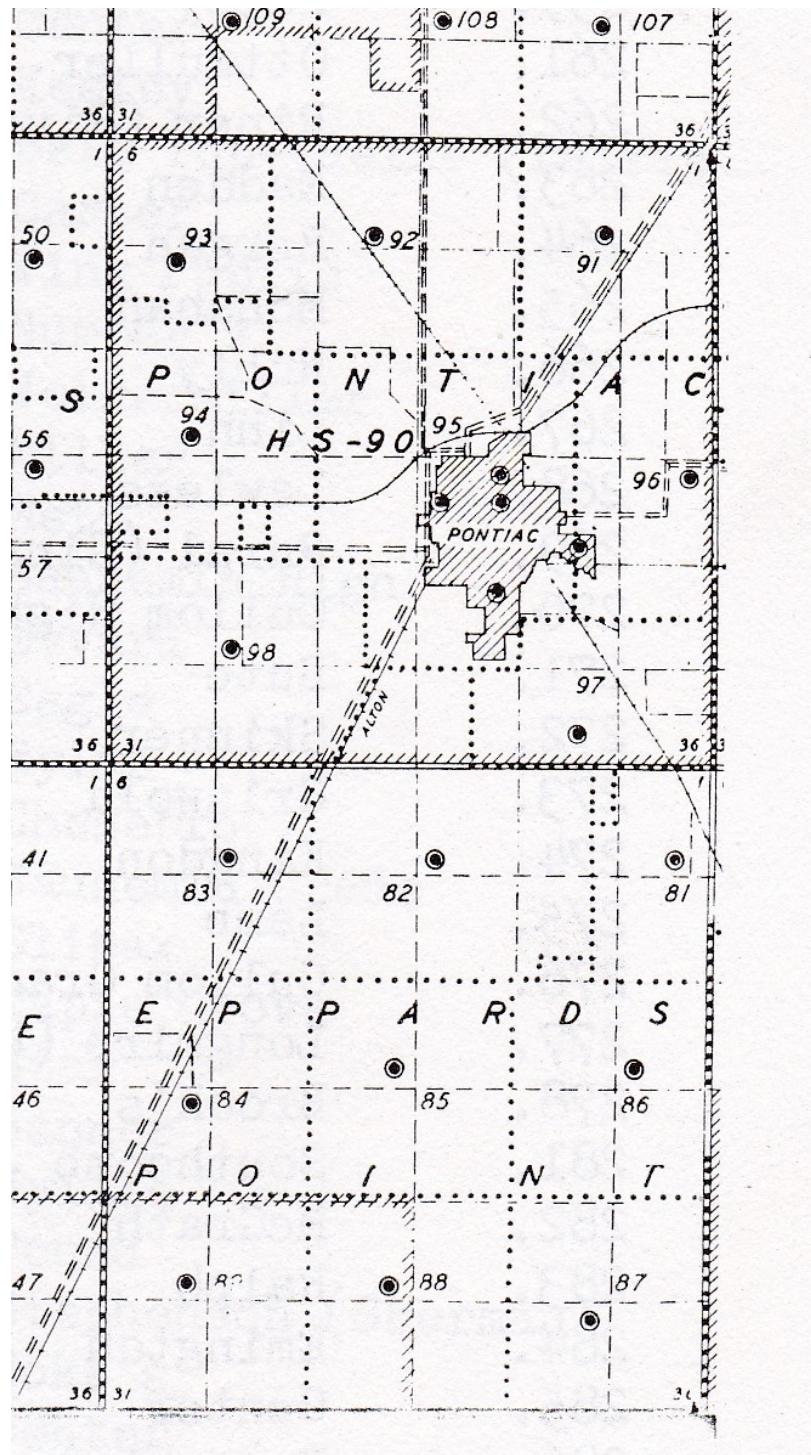
My family farm south of Lodemia is shown on Section 19 owned by John Bodley.

Is BF Bradbury's Farm in Eppards Point shown on 1893 atlas?

Yes

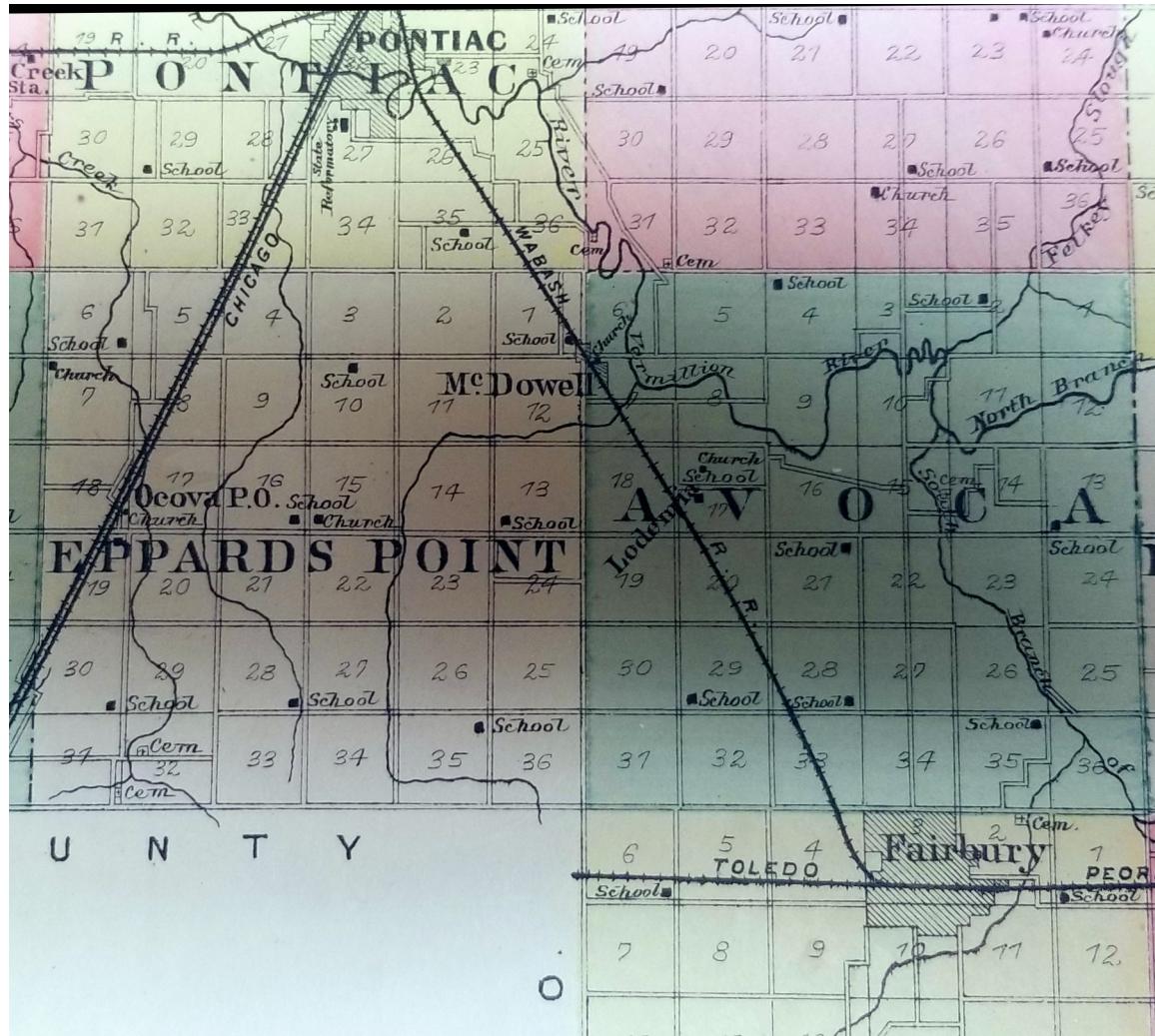


His farm was in the northeast corner of Section 36, along with John Ulfers. He had an 80 acre farm. Note the school house in the upper NE corner of section 35 on land owned by F. W. Bedinger. According to Lucille Goodrich's book, this was country school number 78, which was name Lakeside country school. As the crow flies, Lakeside was about a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from BF Bradbury's farm. I need to drive out there, I was told the old school building still stands.



The school 2 miles west, number 88, was named Turtle Creek country school. The school 2 miles north was named Brick country school.

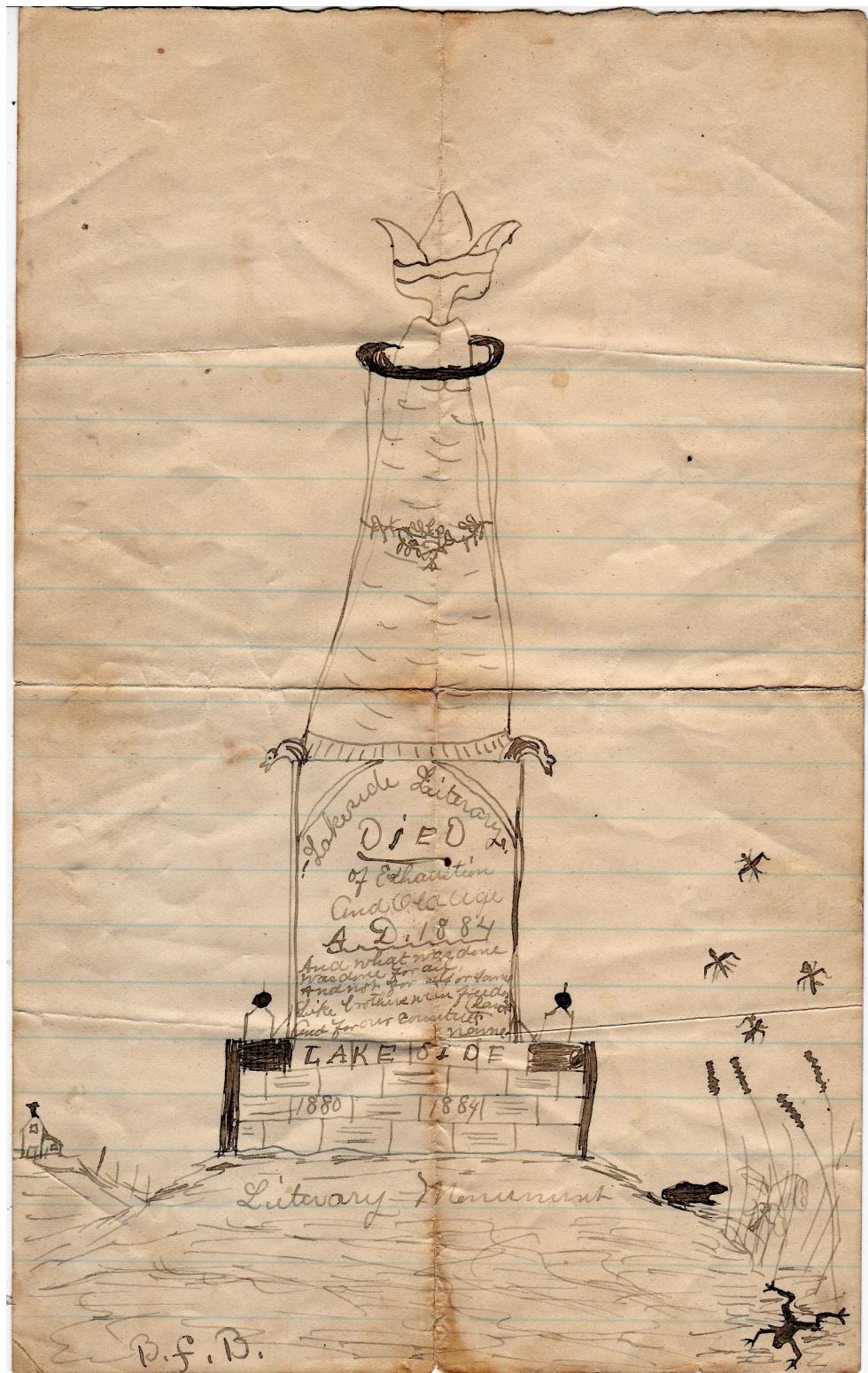
Where is Eppard's Point compared to Fairbury?



BF Bradford's farm was about 3 miles west of the village of Fairbury and about a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Fairbury. His farm was only about 2 miles as the crow flies, from my Bodley home place.

Neat Illustration done in 1884 by BF Bradbury

He apparently tried to start a literary society and named it the Lakeside Literary Society after the country school nearby. It only lasted 4 years per his memorial sketch.



The little book

I will digest it later. I think it is writings by members of the literary society.

Title for Article: The Eppards Point Weather Prophet

Timeline

I think I have enough info to do a timeline, which I will use as the outline to write the story.

- 1776 William L. Bradbury born in New Hampshire.
- 1805 Married Sarah "Sally" Lunt in Massachusetts. He was 28 and she was 34. They had 4 children.
- 1811 Son Joseph Sanders Bradbury born in New Hampshire. Grew up in New Hampshire, but decided to move to New York City as a young man to learn to be a printer. Joseph took a class and one of his classmates was Horace Greeley (1811-1872). Horace Greeley went on to become one of the most famous newspaper men in America. Joseph S. Bradbury and his older brother, William Lunt Bradbury published the New York Sun newspaper.
- 1838 Joseph married Marcena Lunt in Massachusetts. He was 26 and she was 24. They had 12 children. They were 1st cousins.

First cousins are somewhat more likely than unrelated parents to have a child with a serious birth defect, mental retardation or genetic disease. It is now illegal for first cousins to marry in Illinois unless both people are over the age of 50.

- 1845 Around 1845, an epidemic of smallpox broke out in New York City. William L. Bradbury, older brother of Joseph S. Bradbury, died of smallpox at the age of 40. Joseph was 34 when his brother died. Joseph, thus left without a partner in the newspaper enterprise, the father continued to publish the Sun alone for several years. It was a profitable enterprise, having a very fine job-work patronage from first-class business men.
- 1848 Having been seized with an optical ailment, Joseph S. Bradbury was finally compelled to dispose of his business interests in New York, and, under the advice of his physician, to seek an outdoor life in a milder climate, he accordingly moved to Wheeling, W. Va., and as previously indicated, engaged in the manufacture of lumber material. His health being much improved by this change, he was induced to abandon his Virginia occupation, and in order to continue in his out-of-door pursuits, to adopt agricultural pursuits in a pioneer settlement on the prairies of Illinois.
- 1850 family moved from W. Va. To Peoria County. Father apparently farmed.
- 1857 Son Benjamin Franklin Bradbury born in Peoria County. He was the 11th of 12 children.
- 1869 Benjamin Franklin Bradbury came from Peoria to Eppards Point Township when he was 12 years old. The settled on an 80 acre farm in the northeast corner of

section 36. He likely attended Lakeside country school. In that era, farm boys typically went to country school and finished 6th grade, then quit and helped their father on the family farm. Extremely unusual for a boy to finish high school.

1875 He graduated from high school. Was likely in Fairbury or Pontiac. Then attended Eureka College for at least two years and was qualified to be a school teacher. For that era, Benjamin F. Bradbury was a very highly educated young man.

1877 Held certificates to teach first and second grade. Was a school teacher for a few years until he switched to farming. Likely taught at Lakeside country school.

1880 father Joseph S. Bradbury died at age of 68. His mother died 18 months later at the age of 68. With the death of his father, Benjamin F. Bradbury took over farming the 80 acre family farm. He was an avid reader and liked to learn about new topics his whole life.

1880 Benjamin formed the Lakeside Literary club. He likely named it after the Lakeside country school near his farm. A handwritten journal from the Lakeside Literary club was recently donated to the Fairbury Echoes Museum. It contains the date of 1884.

1884 The October 3, 1884, Pontiac Sentinel published an article announcing the Lakeside Literary society was going to give a dramatic and literary entertainment program at the Lakeside school house. Admission was 25 cents and the proceeds would be devoted to the expenses of the society.

1884 The entertainment program must not have been very successful because the Lakeside Literary society ceased operations in 1884. Benjamin was deeply saddened by the closure of the group and drew an elaborate illustration of a memorial monument for the Lakeside Literary Society. He noted the society was born in 1880 and died in 1884 and the society died of exhaustion and old age.

1886 In October of 1886, the Pontiac Sentinel reported that a jury determined that Jennie L. Bradbury, the 36 year old older sister of Benjamin Bradbury, was legally insane and a pauper. She was eventually sent to the Illinois Eastern Hospital for the Insane in Kankakee. She died in this institution in 1926 at the age of 76.

1904 When Benjamin was not occupied farming his 80 acre farm, he devoted himself to educating himself and he spent a great deal of time studying foreign languages and many of the higher and technical branches of science.

Throughout his agricultural experience he has never, however, ceased to maintain a process of educating himself, and has spent much time in studying the languages and many of the higher and more technical branches of science. Benjamin came up with the idea of using principles of astronomy, geography, and meteorology to prepare and “astro-geographical chart” that he could use to make long range forecasts of the weather.

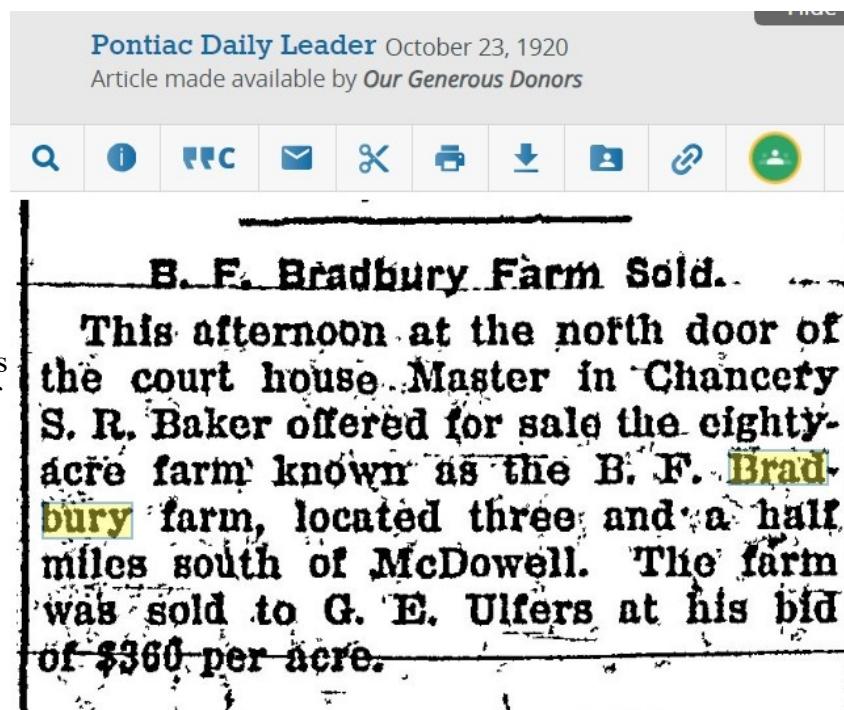
On May 3, 1904, the Pontiac Sentinel newspaper published an article titled "Bradbury's Weather Forecast." The article noted that Bradbury was a farmer living near Fairbury and he has become quite prominent for his weather forecasts. The Sentinel published Bradbury's daily weather forecast for the month of May. For each day of the month, Bradbury predicted whether it would be warm, cool, rainy, cloudy, windy, or have frost. Benjamin was 47 years of age when his first weather prediction was published in the Sentinel.

The Sentinel published a second Bradbury weather forecast in August of 1904 for the upcoming month of September. In October of 1905, the Sentinel published a story about Frank Bradbury, the "Eppard's Point Weather Prophet", being involved with a runaway horse accident on his farm.

Benjamin Franklin Bradbury died in 1919 at the age of 61 on his farm. His dead body was discovered by his neighbors when he had not been heard of for several days. Benjamin Franklin Bradbury was buried in Fairbury's Graceland Cemetery.

In October of 1920, the Pontiac Daily Leader published an article recounting that the 80 acre farm of B. F. Bradbury, located three and a half miles south of McDowell, had been sold for \$360 an acre to G. E. Ulfers. This price would be equivalent to \$5,585 in today's dollars.

During the last six years, in his intervals of leisure, he has made a most searching study of astronomy, geography and



Pontiac Daily Leader October 23, 1920
Article made available by *Our Generous Donors*

B. F. Bradbury Farm Sold.

This afternoon at the north door of the court house Master in Chancery S. R. Baker offered for sale the eighty-acre farm known as the B. F. Bradbury farm, located three and a half miles south of McDowell. The farm was sold to G. E. Ulfers at his bid of \$360 per acre.

meteorology, for the purpose of preparing an astro-geographical chart on which long range forecasts of weather could be based with reasonable certainty. This chart is

intended to reorganize the old principles and methods of weather science, adding materially in the way of new and provable knowledge in meteorology.

